UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1994/1087
22 September 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 22 SEPTEMBER 1994 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

As the Security Council is steered relentlessly towards the easing of sanctions on Serbia and Montenegro, we must express our grave concern that this action is at least premature; ignores current facts; is unbalanced; and is, therefore, counterproductive.

Numerous reports, including from personnel of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), indicate serious doubt as to whether the border between the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia and Montenegro is effectively closed to strategic and war matériel. To cite just a few of the reports:

(a) The Bosnian Serbs attacking the safe area of Bihać are intercepted in their direct communication with Belgrade coordinating the assault;

(b) Temporary bridges and roads are erected to facilitate violations across the border;

(c) Most recently and critically, as reported by The New York Times today,

"United Nations military observers have monitored several hundred flights by Serbian helicopters over north-eastern Bosnia in the past week, and many appear to have originated in Serbia, a senior United Nations official said today.

"Helicopters flying from Serbia into Serb-held parts of Bosnia could be carrying military supplies in violation of the pledge by Serbia's President, Slobodan Milosević, to cut off supplies to the Bosnian Serbs. Such flights would also violate the ban on Bosnian airspace imposed by the United Nations last year.

"'We have not seen anything on this scale before and doubt that the Bosnian Serbs would organize this number of helicopter flights without the active involvement of the Yugoslav Army', the United Nations official, who has seen the military reports, said. Serbia is the dominant republic in Yugoslavia.

"He said officials at the headquarters in Zagreb, Croatia, of the United Nations mission in the Balkans believe the flights, made at night, were used to take supplies to the Bosnian Serbs in territory they hold north and north-west of Tuzla, and possibly to move personnel as well";

The above information is in direct contradiction to the recent report offered by the monitoring team of Brigadier-General Bo Pellnas. We do not cast doubt on General Pellnas's integrity. However, we believe that this contradiction in perceptions reflects how undermanned and ineffective the current monitoring regime is and why its authority on the matter cannot be relied upon without further significant additions to its resources and mandate. How can we seriously consider the accuracy of information provided by the current monitoring team when its manpower, resources and mandate fall well short of that asserted as a minimum necessary for the job by recent reports from the Secretary-General? It unfortunately appears that the current monitoring regime has been constituted in response to political considerations rather than a serious view of the task.

At a time when the strangulation of Sarajevo and ethnic cleansing are being dramatically intensified, including by paramilitary forces from Serbia and Montenegro, the impatient push to adopt an easing of sanctions resolutions seems to be out of place and certainly sends the wrong message.

Finally, the overall balance of actions now being considered by the Security Council is out of balance. While easing of sanctions is being promoted for Serbia and Montenegro and the Bosnian Serbs face a practically ineffectual tightening, the Government of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina has not seen any of the promises of the Contact Group delivered.

We have made positive proposals to bring balance to the Contact Group's draft resolutions. They have been swept aside. If the Contact Group has truly embraced a comprehensive approach to the problem, then this measure is peculiar by the absence of any considerations that address our oft-stated concerns. In fact, all of the measures undertaken so far by the Contact Group reflect a failure to incorporate any of the elements committed to in response to our acceptance and the Serbian rejection of the peace plan. Instead new measures are being introduced to placate and/or reward Serbia and Montenegro, while new arguments are being invented as to why the steps promised to the Bosnians should be reneged upon or abandoned. In fact, we can only sense the back-pedalling and the atmosphere of yet another betrayal.

We will be prepared to endorse the Contact Group's current proposals when they provide for:

(a) Truly effective border monitoring;

(b) Responsive measures to the intensified strangulation of Sarajevo and ethnic cleansing;

(c) The necessary balance through a comprehensive approach to the Contact Group's previous commitments.

May I ask for your kind assistance in circulating the present letter as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Muhamed SACIRBEY
Ambassador and
Permanent Representative